

past. Sikorski recounts that O'Connor then cast a "predatory look" at the tribal members and assured Fowler that they would contribute again in the future.<sup>239</sup>

When O'Connor yielded the floor to the tribal members, at least three of the tribal officials spoke: Taylor, Jones and Crooks. They spoke of their tribes, and the opportunities that gaming operations had afforded them. They described their past support for Democrats, while frequently referring to Lac Courte Oreilles Chairman gaiashkibos as a Republican. They also generally aligned the applicants with Republican politics. They detailed the geography of the tribes on each side of the issue and, framing the issue in relation to the IGRA factors for off-reservation applications, they explained their pursuit of economic impact studies and their desire to submit those studies to Interior to establish that a Hudson casino would be "detrimental to the surrounding community."<sup>240</sup> Fowler's notes reflect that the tribal leaders further alluded to the opponent group's contact with Interior Chief of Staff Collier, whom they believed was disposed in favor of the application. Fowler also noted that they provided their understanding of the positions being taken by Gov. Thompson and some of the area's congressmen and senators.

Several witnesses recall St. Croix Chairman Taylor commenting specifically on his tribe's past financial support of the Democrats, and the St. Croix's willingness and intention to continue that support. Indeed, Artman recalls Taylor's announcing, "I can write a check right

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<sup>239</sup>Sikorski felt that O'Connor crossed the line – at least Sikorski's "personal line" – in drawing a nexus between future contributions and a request for specific assistance through this remark.

<sup>240</sup>Donald Fowler's Meeting Notes, Apr. 28, 1995.